(d) The annual outgo of foreign exchange for the import of nickle in various form is in the range of Rs. 300.00 crores based on current international prices of the metal.

Hijacking of Technology by Duralcon, an American Firm

2636. SHRI S. MADHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an American firm, Duralcon, a subsidiary of Alcon Ltd., have hijacked a commercially important technology developed and patended in 1970 by the Indian Scientists, at the IIT Kanpur in total disregard of Indian Patent Rights; and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI ARANGIL SREEDHARAN): (a) The procedure for redressal of infringement of patent rights is provided for under The Patents Act, 1970. It is for the owner of the patent to approach a Court for relief.

(b) Does not arise.

Request of Power Finance Corporation to World Bank for supply of credit

2637. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Bank has cleared the request of the Power Finance Corporation for financial help for financing power projects in the country;

(b) if so, what was the original request made by the Power Finance Corporation;

(c) to what extent the World Bank has agreed to provide loan; and

(d) what are the projects that will be undertaken with this loan amount?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANIL SHASTRI): (a) No, Sir. The Power Finance Corporation's Project proposal for credit is under discussion with the World Bank.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

Failure of the Punjab and Sind Bank in following time schedule for settlement of loans

2638. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Punjab and Sind Bank has not been able to adhere to the time schedule as laid down by the Reserve Bank of India in the settlement of loan proposals and their sanctions; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor and the action proposed to be taken in the matter?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANIL SHASTRI): (a) and (b) As per the guidelines for advances to Priority Sector issue to Commercial Banks by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) all loan applications upto a credit limit of Rs. 25,000/- are to be disposed of within a fortnight and those for over Rs. 25,000/- within 8 to 9 weeks.

RBI has reported that it has not specified any comprehensive time schedule for disposal of loan proposal at various levels in banks. A recent review of Punjab and Sind Bank reveal that there have been delays in disposal of loan applications. The reasons for delay in disposal of the loans proposal was mainly due to the non-receipt of requisite financial statement/other information alongwith the proposal to enable the sanctioning authorities to properly scrutinise the proposal from all

angles. The RBI is seized of the matter and shall be advising the bank regarding the steps that be taken to minimise delays.

Decline in deposits of regional rural Banks

2639. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Regional Rural Banks are said to be starved of deposits and are thus unable to play their intended role in rural development;

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to attract more deposits to these banks;

(c) what is the deposit mobilisation record of these banks for the last five years;

(d) what prevents Government from offering a higher rate of interest on deposits with Regional Rural Banks as a measure of rural development and improvement of the lot of the rural investors; and

(e) whether there is any proposal to merge the Regional Rural Banks with the public sector commercial banks?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANIL SHASTRI): (a) and (b) National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) have reported that the Regional Rural Banks have recorded on impressive growth rate in mobilisation of deposits during the last few years. In order to give further boost to the deposits in Regional Rural Banks, Central Government have advised State Governments that State agencies functioning at District levels should keep their deposits with PRBs to the extent feasible. Reserve Bank of India has also advised the sponsor banks to involve RRBs in work relating to Rural Publicity for improving customer service which may help in mobilising more rural deposits.

(c) The deposit mobilisation by Regional Rural Banks during the last five years is as under:—

As at the end of the year	Rs. in crores
1984	959.97
1985	1285.82
1986	1714.94
1987	2305.82
1988-89 (15 months period ending March 1989)	3118.58

(d) Reserve Bank of India have permitted RRBs to pay 1/2 per cent interest more than Commercial Banks on savings and time deposits upto 2 years.

(e) There is no proposal to merge DDBs with publis sector commerciall banks at present.

Plan to set up production of Steel

2640. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Steel Authority of India Limited has prepared a plan to set up steel production over the next five years; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN): (a) and (b) The Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) plan to step up ther production of crude steel from the level of 8.27 million tonnes reached last year, i.e. 1989-90, to 13.17 million tonnes at the end of the 8th Plan in 1994-95. The fulfilment of the plan will, however, depend on various factors, of which